

Guide to Mental Health & Family Reunion Services For Returning Guard & Reserve Members In New England

“Putting the pieces together”



Developed by the Hanscom AFB
Life Skills Support Center & Integrated Delivery System

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide the leadership of returning Guard and Reserve members in the New England area with a summary of important services for these members and their families. These services include mental health treatment, family reunification and reintegration briefings to assist members and their families with readjustment issues, and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) defusing briefings to educate returning military members about traumatic services, coping strategies, and when to seek additional help. These services are available through VA and/or military resources. The guide contains VA and military points of contact for these services.

We recommend giving returning members at least three half duty days immediately upon return and prior to post-deployment down time to help them gradually adjust and reintegrate. These half duty days can be used for inprocessing appointments, completing post-deployment surveys, identifying any needs and establishing services to meet these needs with the agencies listed in this guide. In addition, the half duty days will also ease the members' reunion with their families.

Notes about using this guide:

- We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of all information in this guide. If there is inaccurate or outdated information, we apologize and hope that the available information at least got you pointed in the right direction.
- The guide is meant to be used in either paper or electronic formats. The electronic format has the advantages of allowing people to transmit the guide by email and to use the embedded hyperlinks to access websites or send emails.
- Any recommendations in this guide and any links to external websites do not imply DoD or U.S. Air Force endorsement or approval.

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VA Resources

What does the VA offer?

The VA offers the best available treatment services for Guard and Reserve members returning from the combat environment who are presenting with mental health concerns for multiple reasons. These reasons include:

1. The VA providers have the most clinical expertise for dealing with issues related to exposure to a combat environment and most VA programs are offering group treatment, which is one of the most effective forms of treatment for these issues.
2. The VA has psychiatrists who can provide the best medication management.
3. A direct referral to the VA will ensure continuity of care because once a Guard or Reserve member is deactivated, they will need to receive their care through the VA.
4. There are many VAs in the New England area so treatment can be located near to where the member lives or works, minimizing work/life disruption.

Who is Eligible?

OIF/OEF combat veterans defined as:

- Served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Gulf War, **OR**
- Served in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998, **AND**
- Have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions

Receive FREE medical care for TWO YEARS from the date of discharge from active duty for injuries and illnesses potentially associated with combat service.

Care and services for conditions clearly **not** related to combat service may require a co-payment if income is above the threshold for cost free care.

The VA can provide you with priority health care and benefits assistance *even if you are still on active duty or an activated member of the National Guard or Reserve*. If you are a discharged veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom, VA can provide you medical care for two years from your military discharge date for conditions you believe are related to your military service regardless of your income or eligibility status.

Please note that, in addition to OIF/OEF benefits, persons with honorable discharges from AD service during stateside and other duty assignments are also considered veterans by the VA and may be eligible for VA health care. The eligibility at any VA medical center can assist members in determining if they are eligible for VA health care.

Where are VA Services Available?



Bolded names are VA medical centers with a wide variety of specialty medical services. Other locations are VA clinics that have regular medical services.

Who to Contact for Services?

*Note: Depending on the state, some of the local outpatient clinics have mental health services which may be closer than the regional medical center. Primary family reunion/CISM services are based out of the State medical center.

*Note: Prior to any services rendered by the VA, service member must become eligible in the VA system. This can be accomplished by contacting any states returning veterans POC's located on page two.

POC for New England VA Healthcare system: Beth Brown, 781-687-3428,
Beth.M.Brown@med.va.gov (Located at the Bedford VA)

Connecticut:

- Westhaven VA Medical Center, 203-932-5711, <http://www.visn1.med.va.gov/vact/>
- Returning Vet Services POC: Michelle Will, x4246, Michelle.Will@med.va.gov
- POC for CISM/Family Services: Dr Susan Hill x3958

Maine:

- Togus VA Medical Center (Augusta) 207-627-5515, <http://www.visn1.med.va.gov/togus/>
 - Returning Vet Services POC: Deborah Maillet, 207-623-8411, x5848, Deborah.Maillet@med.va.gov
 - POC for CISM/Family Services: Jim Kidwell 207-623-5535

Massachusetts:

- Edith Norse Rodgers Memorial Veterans Hospital, (Bedford) (781) 275-7500, <http://www.visn1.med.va.gov/bedford/>
 - Returning Vet Services POC: Steve Gaska, 781-687-2369, Steve.Gaska@med.va.gov
 - POC for CISM/Family Services: Dennis O'Sullivan, [781-687-2483](tel:781-687-2483)
- North Hampton VA, POC for Returning Vet Services: Elizabeth Huntley, 413-582-3188, Elizabeth.Huntley@med.va.gov
- Boston VA, Healthcare System (Three Locations), <http://www.visn1.med.va.gov/boston/>
 - Returning Vet Services POC: Shirley Jackson, 617-323-7700, x 6126
 - Jamaica Plain, 617-232-9500
 - West Roxbury, 617-323-7700
 - Brockton, 508-583-4500

New Hampshire:

- Manchester VA Medical Center, 800-892-8384, <http://www.visn1.med.va.gov/manchester/>
 - Returning Vet Services POC: Paul Giantonio, 603-624-4366, x6708, Paul.Giantonio@med.va.gov
 - POC for Family Reunion/CISM services: Carol Ahern, 603-668-7060

Rhode Island:

- Providence VA Medical Center 401-273-7100, <http://www.visn1.med.va.gov/providence/>
 - Returning Vet Services POC: Michele Jackson, 401-273-7100, Michele.Jackson@med.va.gov
 - POC for Family Reunion/CISM services: Rochelle Fortin, 401-457-3077

Vermont:

- White River Junction VA Medical Center, VT, 1-866-687-8387, <http://www.visn1.med.va.gov/wrj/>
 - Returning Vet Services POC: Wendy Decoff, 802-295-9363, x 5889, Wendy.Decoff@med.va.gov
 - POC for Family Reunion/CISM services: Dr Lynda Nagy, x5689

How to apply for Benefits

You may apply for VA health benefits by completing VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits. The application form can be [downloaded from the VA web site](#) or obtained by visiting, calling, or writing any VA health care facility. You may also apply by using a secure online electronic application form. Visit <http://www.va.gov/1010ez.htm> for your online application or to get more information about this convenient application process.

Vet Center Resources

The VA also provides readjustment counseling services at locations referred to as Vet Centers, which are separate from VA medical centers. These centers provide counseling to military members, veterans, and family members. The location and contact info for the closest vet center can be found at: <http://www.va.gov/racs/>

Military Resources

Family Readiness Resources for Each State

- Please note that the Family Programs from each branch of the military can provide assistance/referrals for personnel and their families from all branches of the military
- Each one of the Directors is responsible to Adjutant General of each state.

Connecticut:

National Guard Family Program, Director: Kimberly Hoffman, 860-493-2703, Toll free (800) 858-2677, Kim.Hoffman@ct.ngb.army.mil

Maine:

- **National Guard Family Program**, Director: SFC Barbara Claudel, 207-626-4410, Barbara.Claudel@me.ngb.army.mil
- **Family Services Coordinator, 101 Air Refueling Wing, Bangor, Maine (AF)**, Mrs. Patty Reynolds, (207) 990-7494, Patricia.Reynolds@mebng.ang.af.mil
- **Maine Family Assistance Center**, Emergency Line (24/7) 888-625-7200

Massachusetts:

- **National Guard Family Program**, Director: Maureen Serrecchia, 508-233-7222, Maureen.Serrecchia@ma.ngb.army.mil
- **MA National Guard HQ, Milford, MA**, State CISM Coordinator, LTC Rich Fontaine, Cell (508) 631-7906
- **Army Community Services (ACS) Fort Devens**, MA, Mrs. Maggy Ward and Mrs. Imelda Fisher, (978) 796-3023/3119, DSN: 256-3023/3119, maggy.ward@devens.army.mil, mel.fisher@devens.army.mil
- **Army Community Services (ACS) Natick**, MA, Mrs. Joan Tamulevich, (508) 233-4798, Joan.Tamulevich@us.army.mil

New Hampshire:

- **National Guard Family Program**, Director: 1LT Kenneth Leedberg, (603) 225-1215, DSN: 684-9215, kenneth.leedberg@nh.ngb.army.mil, web site: www.nhmilitaryfamily.com

Rhode Island:

- **National Guard Family Program**, Director: LTC Robert Behm, 401-275-4177, DSN: 247-4177, Robert.Behm@ri.ngb.army.mil

Vermont:

- **National Guard Family Program**, Director: Lynn Bedell, 802-338-3347, (888) 607-8773, Lynn.Bedell@vt.ngb.army.mil
- **VT ANG Readiness Coordinator (AF)**, Mrs. Mary Bullis, (802) 652-8035, DSN: 220-8035, mary.bullis@vtburl.ang.af.mil

Active Duty Military Resources for Each Service

Air Force:

- Hanscom AFB, MA
 - **Family Support Center (Family Readiness Services)**, MSgt Otto Morales, (781) 377-4222, DSN: 478-4222
 - **Life Skills Support Center (CISM services)**, Maj (Dr) Mark Bates, (781) 377-4791, DSN: 478-4791

Army:

- Ft Drum, NY
 - **Family Readiness Coordinator (Family Reunification Services)**, Debra Stelfox, (315) 772-0470
 - **CISM and Mental Health**, Capt Benham, (315) 772-6890
- West Point Military Academy, NY
 - **Army Community Service (Family Reunification Services)**, Elizabeth Montanino, (845) 938-4011
 - **Mental Health Clinic**, (845) 938-3441, DSN: 688-3441

Coast Guard:

- Boston Coast Guard Station
 - **Family Services (Family Reunification Services)**, John Bowman (617) 223-3484
 - **CISM Team coordinator**, Cindy King (617) 223-3480

Navy:

- Groton Submarine Station, Groton, CT
 - **Mental Health Clinic (CISM Services, provides services for New London)**, Capt Duvall, (860) 694-4966
- Naval Station, Newport, RI
 - **Fleet and Family Support Center (Family Reunification Services, uses Groton for CISM services)**, Mrs. Kathleen Doherty, (401) 841-2283
 - **Mental Health Clinic**, (401) 841-4475
- Naval Submarine Station, Groton, CT
 - **Fleet and Family Support Center (Family Reunification Services, provides services for Groton)**, DSN: 694-3383
 - **Mental Health Clinic**, (860) 444-8400
- Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, NH
 - **Mental Health Services**, (207) 438-1693

Military One Source Programs

- AF, Army, Marines, Navy started with their own One Source program that offers a wide variety of support services (counseling, financial, legal, parenting/child care, education).
- Available to active and mobilized reserve component (RC) military personnel, deployed civilians and their families worldwide.
- Includes six free counseling sessions for military & family (all branches except AF)
- Contract providers in many locations.
- New services are being added, recent additions include:
 - On-line workshops
 - On-line consultation
 - Language translations
- 24/7 access by phone & internet (see contact info below).
- Person needing services must make request.

Contact info for each service :

- Air Force One Source info: 800-707-5784 <http://www.airforceonesource.com> (user ID: airforce, password: ready)
- Army One Source info: 800-464-8107 http://www.armycommunityservice.org/vacs_onesource/one_source_resource.asp (user ID: army password: onesource)
- Marine One Source info: 800-869-0278 www.MCCSOneSource.com (user ID: marines; password: semperfi)
- Navy One Source info: 800.540-4123, <http://www.navyonesource.com> (user ID: navy, password: sailor)

Links to Additional Resources

There are a lot of internet resources out there for unit leaders, members, and families. Often, the major problem is locating these resources. The internet links to some of these resources are listed below to help people better access the available resources.

- VA website for veterans at <http://www.myhealthvet.va.gov>
- Reserve Affairs website at <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/>
 - This site has an excellent guide called the “HELP Guide to Guard & Reserve Family Readiness” that can be found through the website’s links to Documents and Family Readiness Toolkits.
- DoD Guide to Reserve and Family Member Benefits at <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/documents/family/benefits handbook.pdf>
 - The back of this guide contains numerous other links to resources.
- Navy website with video about combat stress reactions at <http://deploymentlink.osd.mil/movies/videoPopUp.html>
- Deployment Health Clinical Center has resources for clinicians, veterans, and their families at <http://www.pdhealth.mil/>
- Military website that provides regular updates about benefits (pay, leave, health care, insurance, veteran’s benefits) at <http://www.militaryreport.com/>
- DoD training videos available at <http://dodimagery.afis.osd.mil>
- Military.com has a comprehensive list of resources for all military personnel and family members at <http://www.military.com/NewContent/0,13190,resourcespage,00.html>
- Navy Lifelines has a large range resources for military and family members at <http://www.lifelines.navy.mil/>

Instructions for completing VA release form (VA form 10-5345)

The chain of command or attached medical personnel are encouraged to help returning members complete release forms before the members are sent to the VA to ensure optimal continuity of care and military support. The VA and other medical treatment facilities have very strict policies on protecting patient info. Therefore, the member should be given the opportunity to complete a release form that will allow VA staff to talk with the member's chain of command and other personnel that can help support treatment. The VA release form is titled "Request for and Authorization to Release Medical Records or Health Information". It is available on the internet at <http://www.ptsdmanual.com/apph.htm> through the following link: [VA 10-5345 - \(Current as of Mar 2003, includes HIPAA statement\)](#).

Below are instructions for how to fill out each block on the form:

"TO: DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS" block: Write the name of the VA facility providing care.

"PATIENT NAME" block: Write member's Last name, First name, Middle Initial

"SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER" block: ### - ## - ####

"NAME AND ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION, INDIVIDUAL, OR TITLE TO WHO

"INFO IS TO BE RELEASED" block: Options include but are not limited to:

- Member's commander
- First sergeant
- Supervisor
- Military medical personnel
- Military family readiness program personnel
- Chaplain

* Please list names of people and include at least one form of contact info (e.g., phone numbers, email addresses)

"VETERAN'S REQUEST" block: Should be checked off by the individual if information is to be received for treatment of one of the listed sensitive conditions. **Note:** If this block is left blank, and the individual lands up having active treatment for one of the conditions, the V.A. Provider will not be able to return patient information reports re: treatment."

"INFORMATION REQUESTED": Options include but are not limited to:

- Verbal release of member's status and treatment planning info
- Written summary of assessment and treatment

"PURPOSE" block: Options include but are not limited to:

- Ongoing treatment info as needed.
- Ensuring support for significant stressors, medical conditions, or any safety issues.
- Documentation of medical treatment received.

"AUTHORIZATION" block: This block is used to set a time limit on the release. The time limit can be a specific date or the member can write in "for the duration of treatment".

"DATE" block: Day Month and Year when form is completed

"SIGNATURE" block: Member who releasing his/her info signs here.



Department of Veterans Affairs

**REQUEST FOR AND AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE
MEDICAL RECORDS OR HEALTH INFORMATION**

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires us to notify you that this information collection is in accordance with the clearance requirements of section 3507 of the Act. We may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. We expect that the time expended by all individuals completing this form will average 2 minutes. This includes the time to read instructions, gather the necessary facts and fill out the form. The purpose of this form is to specifically outline the circumstances under which we may disclose data.

The execution of this form does not authorize the release of information other than that specifically described below. The information requested on this form is solicited under Title 38, U.S.C. The form authorizes release of information in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, 45 CFR Parts 160 and 164, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and 38 U.S.C. 5701 and 7332 that you specify. Your disclosure of the information requested on this form is voluntary. However, if the information including Social Security Number (SSN) (the SSN will be used to locate records for release) is not furnished completely and accurately, Department of Veterans Affairs will be unable to comply with the request. The Veterans Health Administration may not condition treatment, payment, enrollment or eligibility on signing the authorization.

ENTER BELOW THE PATIENT'S NAME AND SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER IF THE PATIENT DATA CARD IMPRINT IS NOT USED.

TO: DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (Print or type name and address of health care facility)

PATIENT NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

NAME AND ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION, INDIVIDUAL OR TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL TO WHOM INFORMATION IS TO BE RELEASED

VETERAN'S REQUEST: I request and authorize Department of Veterans Affairs to release the information specified below to the organization, or individual named on this request. I understand that the information to be released includes information regarding the following condition(s):

☐ DRUG ABUSE

☐ ALCOHOLISM OR ALCOHOL ABUSE

☐ TESTING FOR OR INFECTION WITH
HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV)

☐ SICKLE CELL ANEMIA

INFORMATION REQUESTED (Check applicable box(es) and state the extent or nature of the information to be disclosed, giving the dates or approximate dates covered by each)

☐ COPY OF HOSPITAL SUMMARY

☐ COPY OF OUTPATIENT TREATMENT NOTE(S)

☐ OTHER (Specify)

PURPOSE(S) OR NEED FOR WHICH THE INFORMATION IS TO BE USED BY INDIVIDUAL TO WHOM INFORMATION IS TO BE RELEASED

NOTE: ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF INFORMATION DESIRED MAY BE LISTED ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM

AUTHORIZATION: I certify that this request has been made freely, voluntarily and without coercion and that the information given above is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that I will receive a copy of this form after I sign it. I may revoke this authorization, in writing, at any time except to the extent that action has already been taken to comply with it. Written revocation is effective upon receipt by the Release of Information Unit at the facility housing the records. Redisclosure of my medical records by those receiving the above authorized information may be accomplished without my further written authorization and may no longer be protected. Without my express revocation, the authorization will automatically expire: (1) upon satisfaction of the need for disclosure; (2) on _____ (date supplied by patient); or (3) under the following conditions(s):

I understand that the VA health care practitioner's opinions and statements are not official VA decisions regarding whether I will receive other VA benefits or, if I receive VA benefits, their amount. They may, however, be considered with other evidence when these decisions are made at a VA Regional Office that specializes in benefit decisions.

DATE

SIGNATURE OF PATIENT OR PERSON AUTHORIZED TO SIGN FOR PATIENT (Attach authority to sign, e.g., POA)

FOR VA USE ONLY

IMPRINT PATIENT DATA CARD (Name, Address, Social Security Number)

TYPE AND EXTENT OF MATERIAL

DATE

RELEASED BY